SOLDIERS of the NAPOLEONIC WARS

By BRYAN FOSTEN

British Foot Guards At Waterloo June 1815

(4) Colours and weapons

Third Regiment of Foot Guards, Sergeant of the Light Company in Service Dress, 1815, wearing full marching order with trousers and gaiters. Note the Thistle Star badge on the pouch and the red sash.

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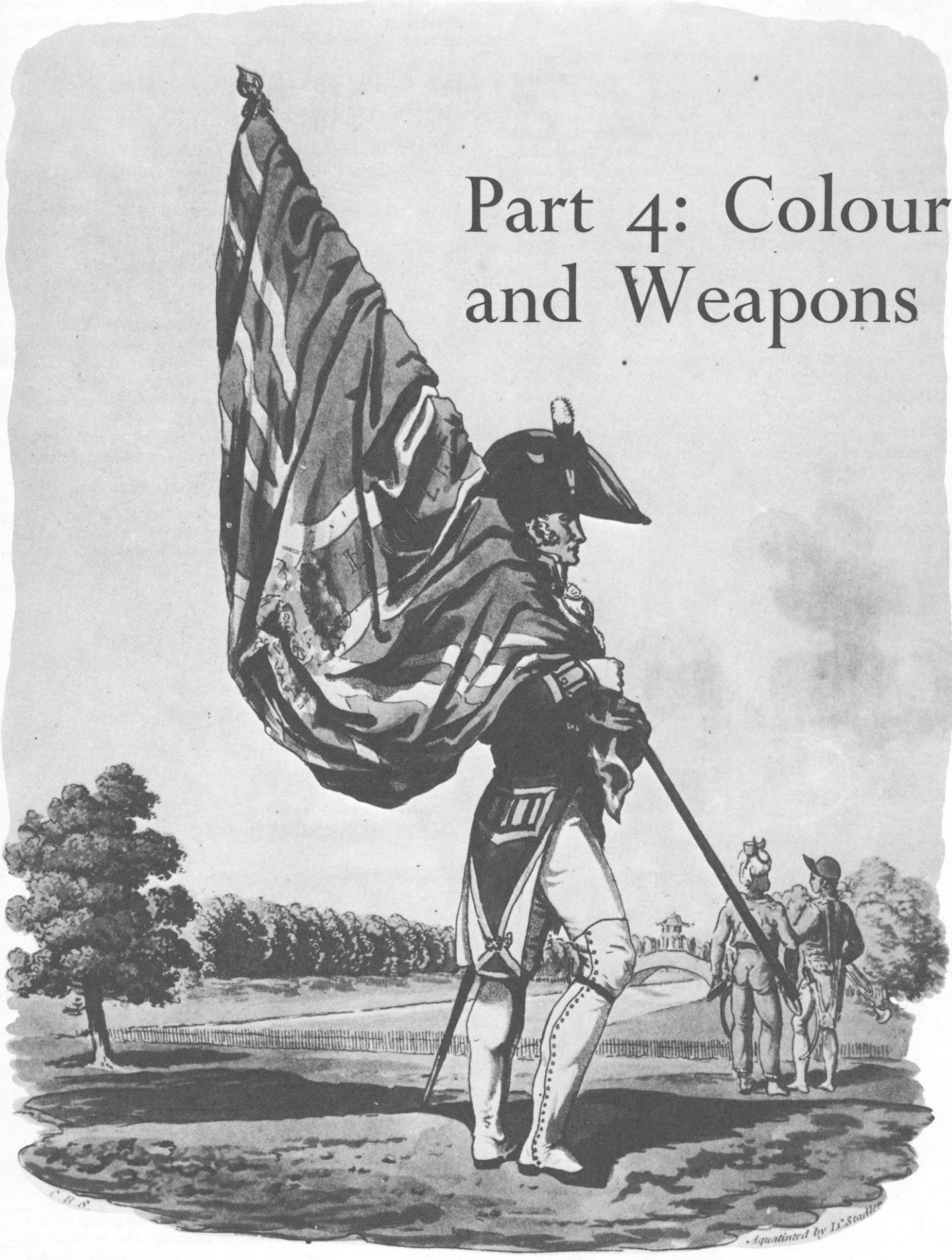
Part 4: Colours and Weapons



An Ensign of the Foot Guards (regiment not specified but probably the 1st Regiment) in full dress, as depicted in a Hamilton-Smith print of 1812. In the background can be seen a member of the band in state clothing and a negro musician (National Army Museum).

COLOURS

AT this period infantry colours were 6 ft 6 inches wide by 6 ft deep on the pike. The pike was 9 ft 10 inches long including a spearhead and a metal ferrule. The Colours were carried by young ensigns. Hamilton-Smith has a plate of the 9th Foot which shows an ensign and colour sergeant. It should be noted that the colour has been wound around the pike so that little of the fly remains. This method of carrying the colour on active service was probably universal for otherwise it must have required some strength to handle flags of this size especially in breezy weather.

For the Foot Guards the King's Colour was crimson and the Regimental Colour was the National Flag (known as the Great Union and since 1802 including the cross of St Patrick). In 1815 each regiment of the Foot Guards had three Crimson Colours, the Colonel's, the Lieutenant Colonel's and the Major's mostly, but not always, carried by the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd battalions respectively.

In 1815 the question of which battalion carried which of these crimson colours had not been finally resolved although by 1855 orders were finalised. However there is reason to believe that by 1815 the matter had been established by usage. Company colours had been long abolished for the Infantry generally but the Foot Guards had been permitted as a special privilege to continue carrying theirs, and these became known as the Regimental Colours. They were carried in rotation but it is not clear which battalion carried which colour at any one period.

These unique colours comprised the Great Union throughout but had the old traditional Royal or other Ancient Badges in the centres and the number of the company displayed, usually in gold Roman numerals, in the upper canton next to the pike. Many of these ancient and honourable badges can be traced back to the beginning of the Regiments' histories and are described by Sandford in his account of the Coronation of HM James II. The Badges seem to have differed very little, if at all, until after 1815.

The King's Colour of the Foot Guards

Colours of the 1st Foot Guards

Colonel's Colour : Crimson, ensigned with the Royal Crown in the centre in full colours.

Lieutenant Colonel's Colour : Crimson, ensigned with the interlaced and reversed Royal GR Cypher with the Royal Crown above it all in proper colours. The cypher in gold. A small union flag in the upper canton next to the pike.

Major's Colour : The same design as the Lieutenant Colonel's, but with a small gold 'pile wavy' from the lower corner of the union.

The 1st Foot Guards may have had a small gold II and III beneath the central badge for the Lieutenant Colonels, and the Major's colours. If this is so it means that the pattern of them being carried by the 2nd and 3rd battalions had already been set.

Colours of the Coldstream Regiment

Colonel's Colour : Crimson, ensigned with the Star of the Order of the Garter set in the centre under the Royal Crown both in proper colours.

An ensign and colour sergeant of 1st Foot Guards showing the method of carrying the colour partially furled and the colour sergeant's method of defending the ensign and colour with his pike. Detail is taken from a Hamilton-Smith print.

Ensign of 1st Foot Guards in 1815 carrying the King's Colour. Note that he has the standard issue water canteen rather than a privately purchased flask. The special bucket and shoulder belt for carrying the colours may be seen here in detail.

Lieutenant Colonel's Colour : Crimson, ensigned with the Garter Star set within the Garter all under the Royal Crown in full colours and with a small union in the upper canton next to the pike.

Major's Colour : Crimson, the same design as the Lieutenant Colonel's colour but with the union in the upper canton and a small gold 'pile wavy' from the lower corner of the union.

Colours of the 3rd Foot Guards

Colonel's Colour : Crimson, ensigned with the Royal Arms of Scotland in Gold and Red set under the Royal Crown in proper colours. Beneath the Arms the motto 'En Ferus Hostis' on a white label.

Lieutenant Colonel's Colour : Crimson, ensigned with the Thistle of Scotland and the Rose of England Badges each with its leaves all on a common stalk. The Royal Crown set above all in proper colours. Beneath the Thistle and the Rose the motto 'Unita Fortior' in black on a white label. In the upper canton next to the pike a small union.

Major's Colour : Crimson, ensigned with the Star of the Order of the Thistle under the Royal Crown all in proper colours and with the motto 'Nemo Me Impune Lacessit' in black lettering on a white label.

The Regimental Colours of the Foot Guards

In 1815 one Company (Regimental) Colour was carried by each of the Battalions of each Regiment. The colours carried by all the battalions at Waterloo are not known. The following information is as much as the writer has been able to find using all the known sources.

1st Foot Guards

One battalion is said to have carried the Colour of the VIII Company at Waterloo. This colour had the Roman numeral in gold in the upper canton nearest the pike and the Dragon of Wales in the centre of the Great Union under the Royal Crown.

2nd Foot Guards

Second battalion is said to have carried the XIII Company Colour. It has the Roman numeral in the upper canton next to the pike and the 'Conjoined Rose and Pomegranate Badge' in the centre under the Royal Crown in proper Colours.

3rd Foot Guards

It is not known which of the company colours was carried.

Battle Honours

The Peninsular Wars had seen a great increase in the display of battle honours on Regimental Colours. The practice had become become firmly established by 1815. The honours of the Regiments at this period were:

1st Foot Guards

'Lincelles' and 'Coruña'.

2nd Foot Guards

'Peninsular', 'Lincelles', 'Talavera', 'Barrosa'. The other honour was the White Sphinx with two sprays of laurel and the yellow label lettered in black 'Egypt'. This was probably carried under the central badge.

Ensign of the 1st Foot Guards in full dress, 1815. Note the detail of the pike staff and its head. The pike was 9 ft 10 ins tall.

Ensign with colour, in campaign dress. He is wearing the overcoat, shako cover, and trousers. Note the method of gripping the pike. Typical Belgian buildings are seen at the rear and the detail in this drawing is taken from a contemporary print by the Belgian artist Engmen.

3rd Foot Guards

'Lincelles', 'Talavera', 'Barrosa' and 'Peninsular' together with the Sphinx as the Coldstreams.

In 1815 the 1st Foot Guards had 24 Company badges, the 2nd Foot Guards 16, and the 3rd Foot Guards 13.

The Regimental Company Badges

A brief description in everyday language of the Badges used by the three regiments is given below.

1st Foot Guards

Company	Badges
1st	The Crowned Lion on the Royal Crown.
2nd	A Red Rose surmounted by a White Rose.
3rd	A Gold Fleur-de-Lys.
4th	A Gold Portcullis with hanging chains.
5th	A Silver Rose in a Flaming Sun.
6th	A Thistle in full colours.
7th	A silver stringed Gold Harp.
8th	A red winged Welsh Dragon on a green mound.
9th	A Silver Greyhound with a red collar on a green mound.
10th	The Flaming Sun.
11th	A Silver Unicorn with a Prince's coronet and a chain around its neck on a green mound.
12th	A Silver Antelope with a Duke's coronet the same.
13th	A Silver Hart with a Duke's coronet lying on a green mound.
14th	A Silver Falcon with a gold beak and talons and a fetterlock.
15th	A Red Rose.
16th	A Silver Swan with a red beak and legs and a Duke's coronet and chain around its neck on a green mound.
17th	A Crowned Falcon with a Sceptre standing on a tree trunk with red and white Roses sprouting from the tree's right side.
18th	A Gold Tree Trunk with three leaves sprouting from its right side.
19th	A Sceptre and a Sword crossed, the sword over the sceptre. Sword has gold pommel and hilt.
20th	A Crowned Head in a tree on a green mound.
21st	The Sun rising behind clouds.
22nd	A Flaming Gold Beacon.
23rd	Two crossed Ostrich Feathers with gold quills.
24th	On a gold wreath a triple towered tower from which a Silver Hart is springing.

2nd Foot Guards

Company	Badges
1st	A Silver Lion, standing facing the pike, tail between legs and reflexed back over loins standing on a green mound.
2nd	Three Ostrich Feathers with motto 'Ich Dien'.
3rd	A Silver Panther with red spots and flames coming from its mouth.
4th	Crossed Swords, points up, hilts gold, pommels gold.
5th	St George slaying the Dragon in proper colours.
6th	A Red Rose in the Garter.
7th	A Centaur firing an Arrow facing towards the pike.
8th	Crossed gold Sceptres.
9th	The Knot of the Order of the Garter within the Garter.
10th	A gold circle of radiating arms each tipped with a fleur-de-lys (known as an 'escarbuncle').
11th	A Silver Boar with gold tusks and hackle facing the pike on a green mound.
12th	A Dun Cow facing the pike on a green mound.
13th	A Red Rose surmounted by a White Rose impaled with a gold pomegranate.
14th	A Silver Galloping Horse on a green mound.
15th	The Crown of Charlemagne all in gold.
16th	A pillar rising out of a Duke's crown, the top decorated with a Coronet out of which three peacocks feathers spray. On the feather a silver star. On either side of the pillar and out of the Coronet, silver bladed sickles, curving in towards the pillar with tufts of the peacocks feathers along the backs of the blades. Over the pillar and the bottoms of the blades of the sickles the Silver Horse of Hanover (a simplified description of the crest of the House of Hanover/Brunswick).

3rd Foot Guards

Company	Badges
1st	A Crowned Red Lion with bright blue talons and tongue facing the pike and grasping a sword in its right claw and a sceptre in its left, both the sword and sceptre upright, all on a roccoco shield of silver with the motto 'In Defence' in black lettering on a white label beneath.
2nd	A Gold Flaming Grenade with the motto 'Terrorem Affero' beneath.
3rd	A Red Lion Rampant in a gold roccoco shield with the motto 'Intrepidus' beneath.
4th	St Andrew behind his silver cross on a Star suspended from a Thistle in proper colours with the motto 'Nemo me impune laccesit' beneath.
5th	A Red Lion in a roccoco gold shield with the motto 'Timere Nescius' beneath.
6th	A Blue Rampant Griffon on a gold roccoco shield with the motto 'Belloque Ferox' beneath.
7th	A Phoenix rising in proper colours from red and yellow flames and beneath the motto 'Per Funera Vitam'.
8th	Jupiter's Thunderbolt in proper colours with the motto 'Horror Ubique' beneath.
9th	A Gold Cannon firing proper flames towards the pike with the motto 'Concussae Cadent Ubique' beneath.
10th	A Salamander surrounded by flames all in proper colours with the motto 'Pascua Nota Mihi' beneath.
12th	A trophy of Arms, Drums and Flags in proper colours with the motto 'Honores Prae Refero' beneath.
12th	The Cross of St Andrew on a blue roccoco shield with the motto 'In Hoc Signo Vinces' beneath.
13th	An English Hound Dog facing the pike on a green mound with the motto 'Intunera Fides' beneath.

Guards in camp at Paris, showing typical off-duty wear while on campaign. Note the water bottle and forage cap. Detail is from a German print.

THE WEAPONS

Private of 1st Foot Guards in the standard firing position, with the Land musket at the moment of firing. Note how the open cartridge pouch fell readily to hand at the hip.

The Firelock

Inspection reports state that before 1815 the Foot Guards were carrying the 'old' and new firelocks. The new weapon was the Land pattern musket with the 3 ft 6 inch barrel, brass butt furniture, and a steel ramrod. Limited supplies of this improved weapon were available before Waterloo and were probably issued to selected regiments including the Foot Guards. Examples are known engraved on the lock plate with an indication that they were issued to the Guards. The Land pattern musket weighed approximately 11 pounds 6 ounces, and was probably the finest smooth bore weapon in Europe at this time. It took a ·75 calibre ball; that is to say 12 balls to the pound, and had a simple foresight which doubled as a bayonet stud. The weapon was usually fired with the bayonet fixed. This helped to keep the muzzle down as the major fault in volley firing is said to have been the tendency for troops under stress to fire over the heads of the enemy. The firelock sling was 1 inch wide and made of thick buffalo hide. The sling was usually stitched at the trigger guard swivel, passed through the upper swivel and secured by a leather slide or a thong and toggle sewn on the rear of the sling and passed through one of a series of holes punched in the upper part.

Sergeants of the Light Infantry company may have carried a lighter and more refined version of the described musket.

The bayonet was a triangular weapon, 1 ft 5 inches long and was carried in a leather scabbard dressed with heelball and with a brass ferrule.

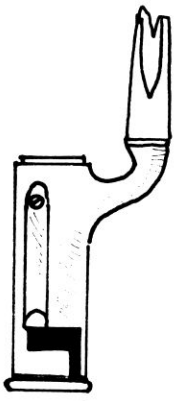
The Swords

Field Officers and Light Infantry Officers

Light Infantry Officers carried a sharply curved sabre with a gilded brass knuckle bow guard with a lions head pommel. The blades were damascened and etched with foliated and armorial designs. The scabbards were heelballed leather with brass mounts and rings. The swords appear not to have been uniform and were also carried by the mounted Field Officers.

Battalion and Grenadier Officers

A light, straight bladed sword was carried, with a gilded brass knuckle bow and shellguard, fluted ball pommel and a grip bound with silver wire. The scabbard was heelballed leather and fitted with brass mounts so that it could be carried in a frog, which was more usual, or on slings.



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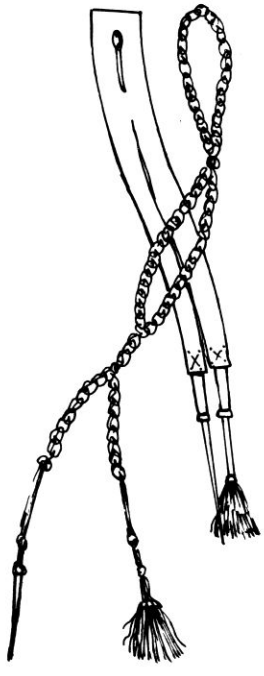

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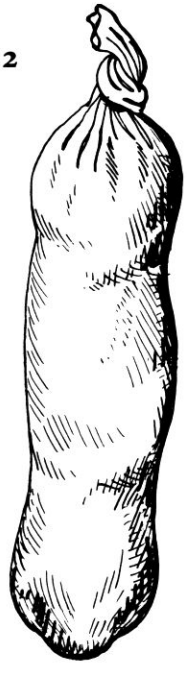

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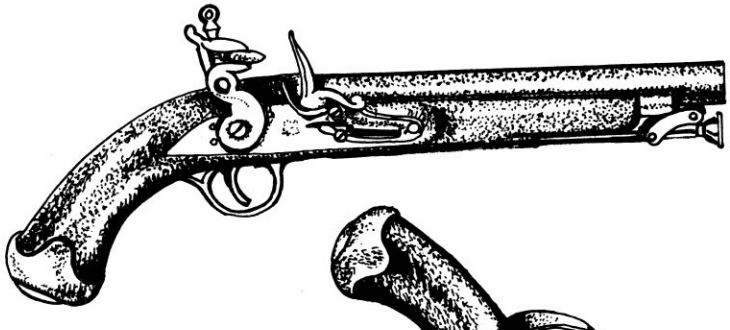

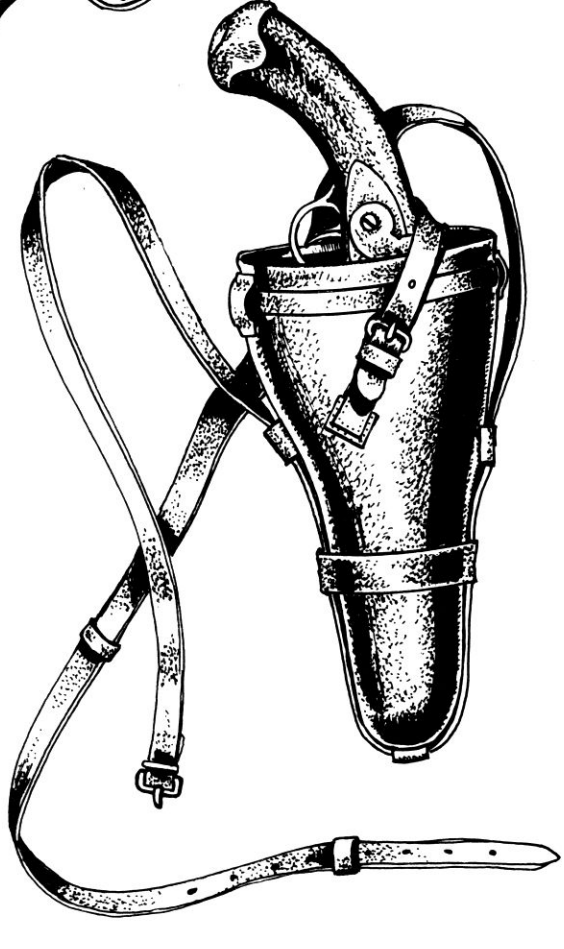

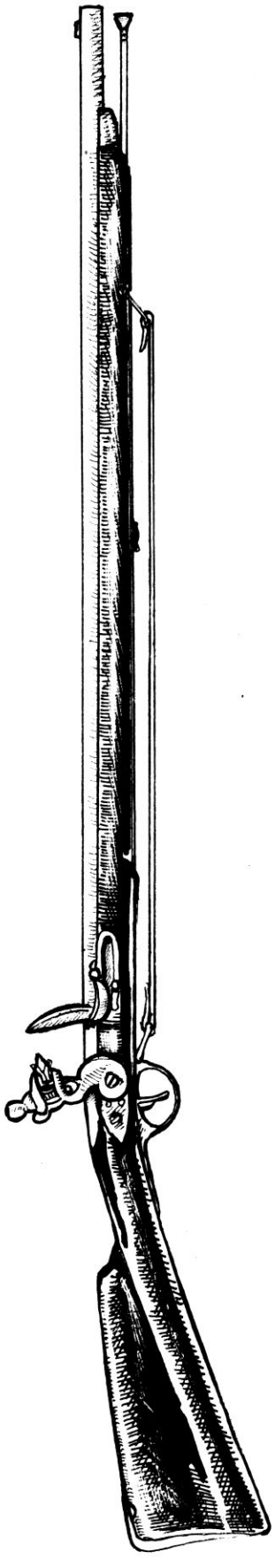

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Sergeants

NCOs of the Foot Guards wore special pattern swords with very slightly curved blades, and brass knuckle bow guards, with the regimental badge set in the front in an elliptical form. The pommel was a lion's head and formed a backing to a white cord and brass wire grip. Sergeants of the Light Infantry Companies carried the sword and the bayonet on the same belt.

Sword Belts

Field Officers

White leather waist belts with lions-head and snake clasp and the sword suspended from two slings were worn.

Light Infantry Company

White leather shoulder belt with regimental plate was worn. Sword was supported on slings from one or two rings.

Battalion and Grenadier Companies

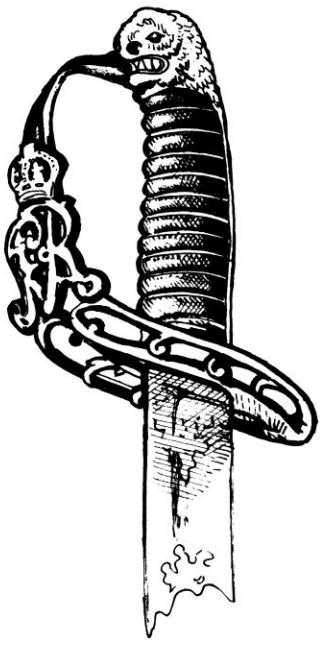
White leather shoulder belt with regimental plate was worn. The sword was worn in a frog with a hole punched for the stud on the upper scabbard fitting.

Pikes

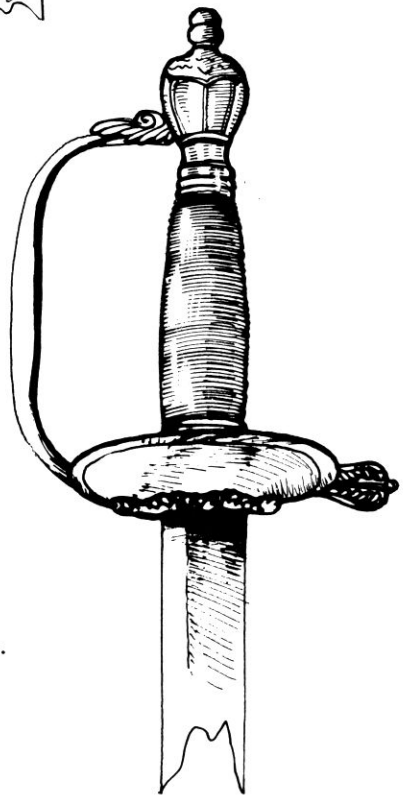
The sergeants of the Grenadier and Battalion companies were armed with 9 ft pikes. These weapons, also called 'sergeants spontoons', and 'sergeants crossbar spears' had a head similar to a European boar spear with a cross bar or toggle just beneath the blade. The weapon was used to dress the ranks and push troops into line and was very effective as a weapon against cavalry. The pikes were also used strapped together to form the infamous 'triangle' when men were flogged. The weapon was abolished in 1830.

Drawings Opposite:

(1) Land pattern musket
Shown alongside is the socket end of the bayonet which fitted over the muzzle.
(2) A cartridge
(3) Pistol and Holster
Arrangements of this kind are shown in many of the contemporary drawings of German troops in the Peninsular Wars. A British officer carries one in a drawing by St. Clair of the Battle of Toulouse.
(4) Prickers and Brushes
Two examples, one leather and the other on a fine chain.

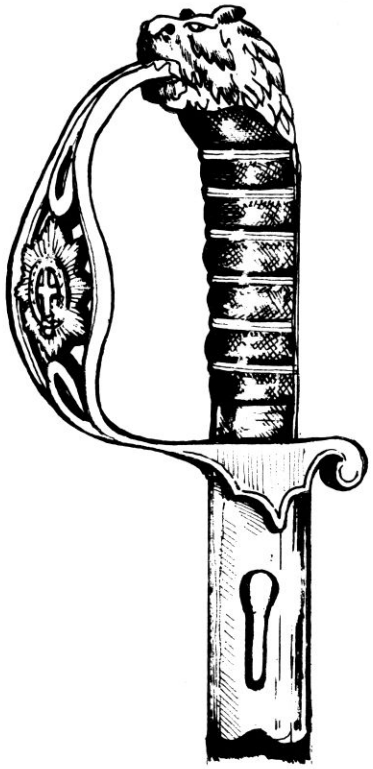


Sword for field officers and light infantry company officers.

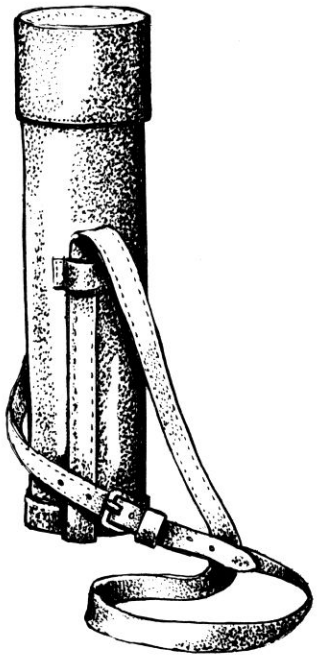


Sword for battalion company officers.

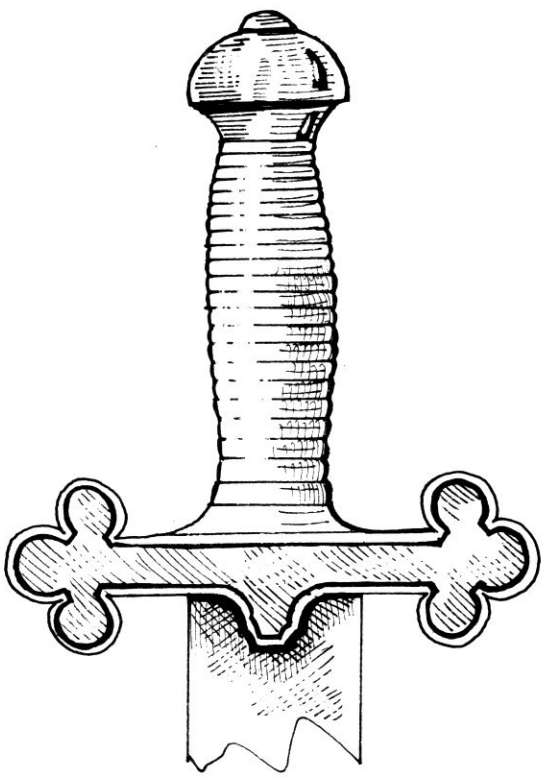
Sergeant's Pike
This weapon was made to the following dimensions: length – 9 ft; length of blade – 12¾ inches; width of toggle – 5½ inches; length of metal shank – 13½ inches; length of metal foot – 2¼ inches. The spear head screwed into the socket and the cross toggle was also made separately. Sergeants of the light infantry carried the fusil.



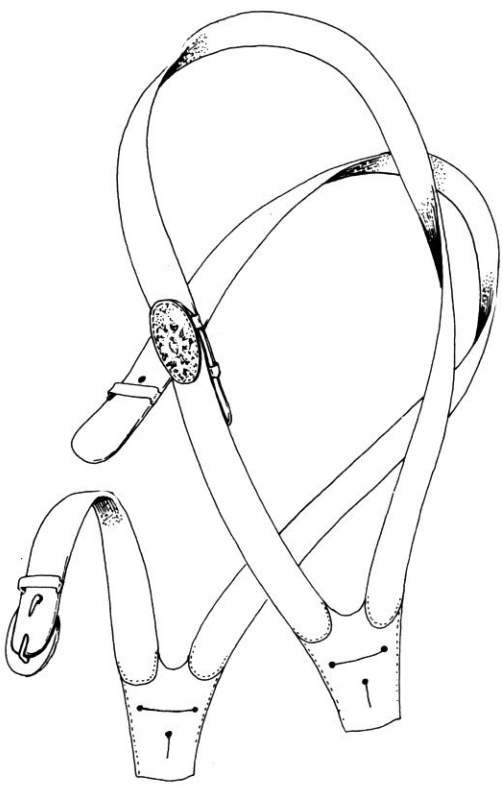
Sergeant's pattern sword. The badge on the guard differed for each of the three regiments.



Officer's spy glass case in leather, typical of the type carried on campaign by many officers.



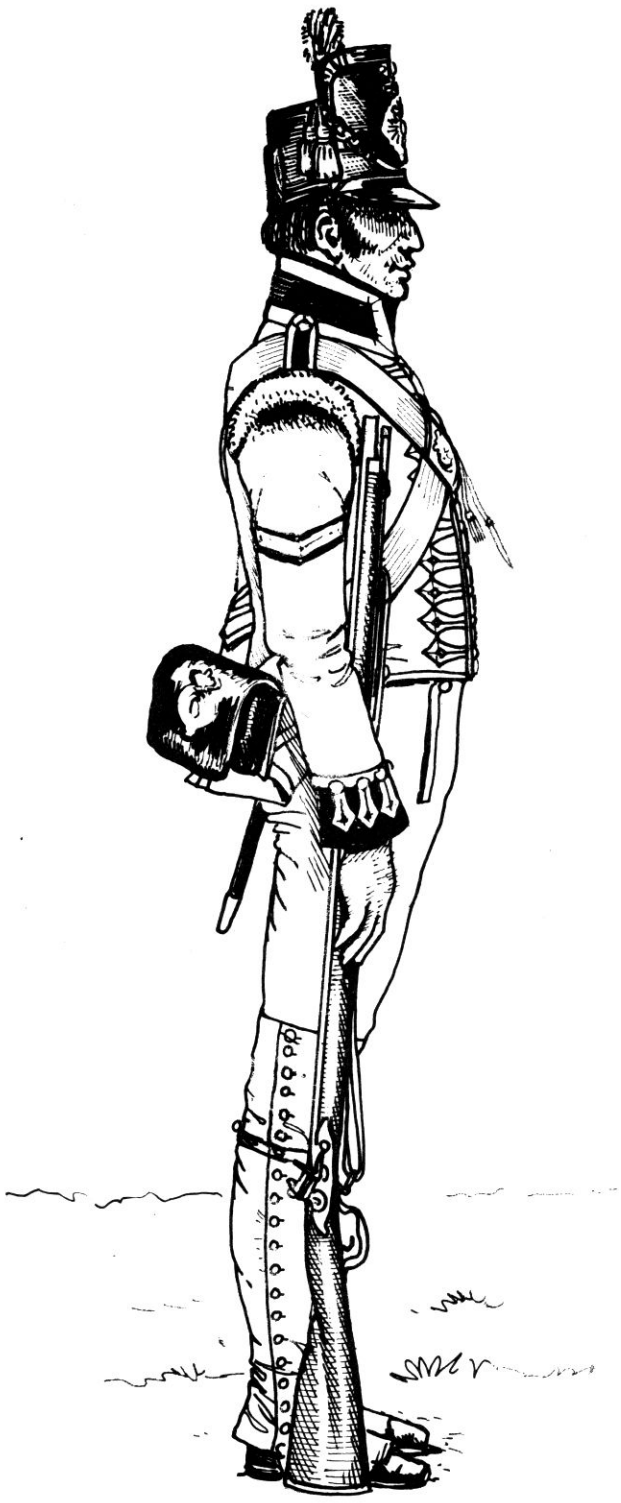
Bandsmen carried a plain short sword, the hilt of which is shown here.



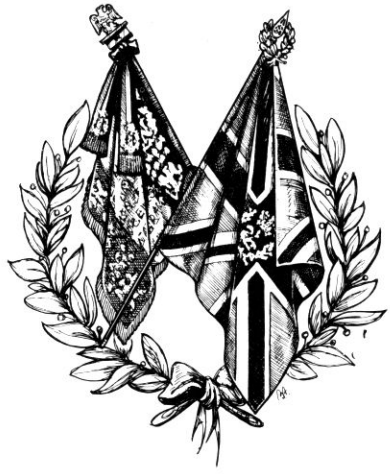
Officer's sword shoulder belt showing method of fastening.

FIRELOCK DRILL

FOR many years the British soldier used a well established drill procedure for handling and firing the firelock musket. British musketry was renowned for its precision, both in drill and as a weapon of war. To the modern reader, used to seeing soldiers drilling with lighter rifles, the old musketry drill looks clumsy and complex, and difficult to follow. On the next two pages the sequence of drill, loading, firing, and re-loading is shown and described in strip sequence with all the relevant orders given in full.



A chosen man (lance-corporal) of the 1st Foot Guards light company in state clothing. He is at the 'Order Arms' position as shown in the drill chart on page 99.



Firelock Drill, 1803

(1) Shoulder Arms. (2), (3) Support Arms. On the command '*Support Arms*' the soldier will come from the 'Shoulder' to the 'Support' in three movements. When marching any distance or standing at ease the soldier was allowed to bring the right arm across the body as in 2, but had to remove the right hand on the order '*Halt*' or '*Dress ranks*'. The command '*Carry Arms*' reversed the order and brought the soldier back from the 'Support' to the 'Shoulder' in three movements. Sentries on guard duty or posted at the 'Shoulder Arms' were allowed to come to the 'Support' but on the approach of an officer had to return to the 'Shoulder' position. The command '*Order Arms*' brought the firelock from the 'Shoulder' to the side in two movements as at 6.

(4), (5), (6) Fix Bayonets. From the 'Order Arms' position 'receive the command '*Fix Bayonets*'. On the word '*Fix*' grip the firelock with the left hand and on the word '*Bayonet*' complete the drill in one movement'.

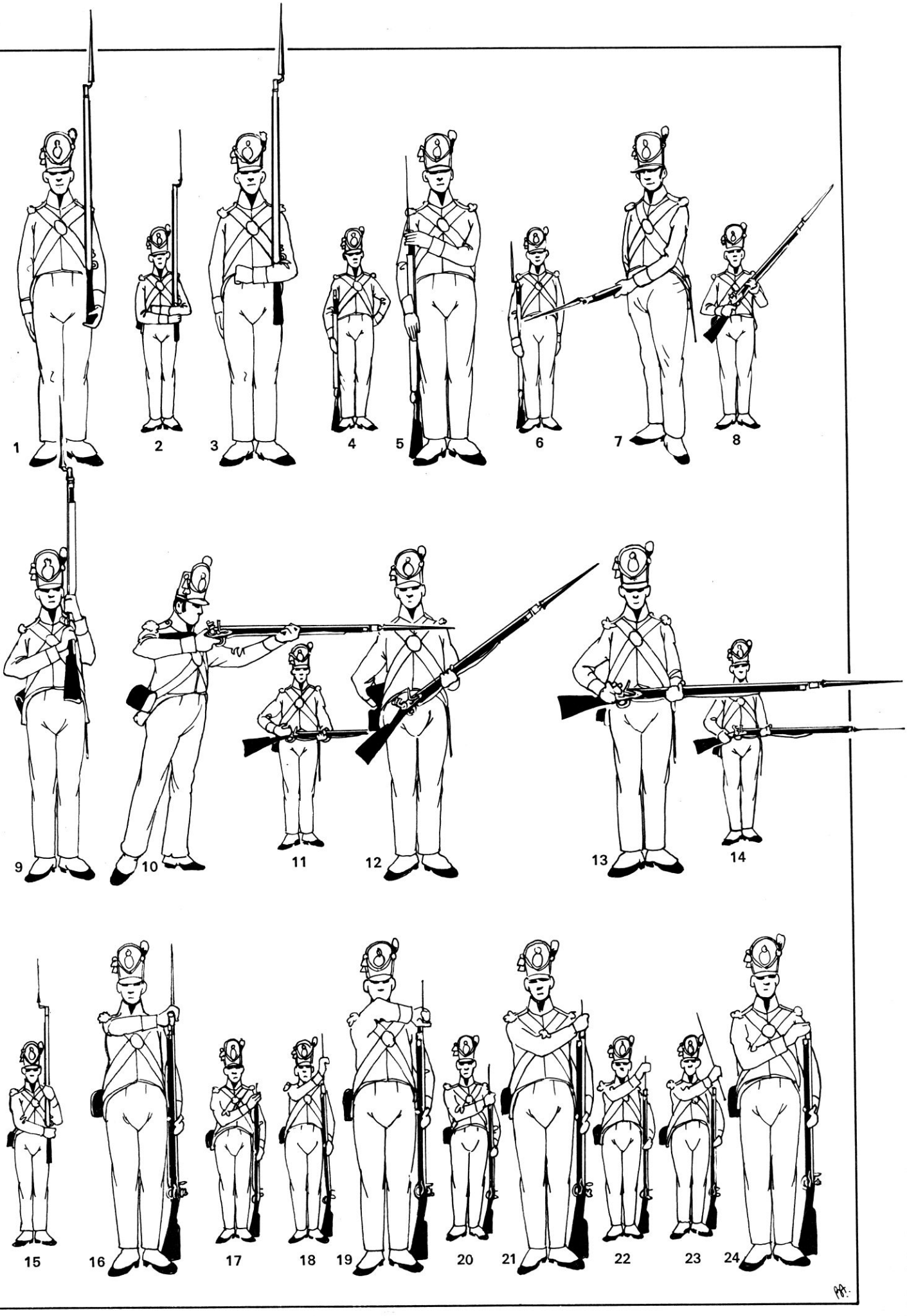
(7), (8) Charge Bayonets. From the 'Shoulder Arms' position 'receive the command '*Charge Bayonets*' and come to the 'Charge' (7) in two movements' (7, 8). This was for the parade ground. In mounting a bayonet attack the command '*Prepare to Charge*' given at the 'Shoulder' (1) or, after firing a volley, at the 'Present' (10), brought the soldier in one movement to the 'Port Arms' (8). This position was held during an advance, until within a few yards of the enemy, when the front rank came down to the 'Charge' (7). 'Port Arms' or the High Port was also the position in which a sentry issued a challenge.

(9) to (24) The Firing Drill. 'At the 'Shoulder' on the command '*Make Ready*' come to the '*Recover*' and cock the piece (9). Receive the commands; '*Present*' ('Look steadfastly down the barrel') (10) and '*Fire*'. On the command '*Load*' come down to the Priming Position (11), and half cock. On the command '*Handle Cartridge*' take a cartridge from the pouch and bite off' (12). (. . . the top of the cartridge with the ball, this was presumably held in the mouth).' On the command '*Prime*' shake some powder into the pan, shut the pan, and seize the small of the butt (13, 14). On the command '*Bout*' (Cast About), bring the firelock to the side, shake the cartridge powder into the barrel, and push in the paper and shot (. . . taken from the mouth), grip the ramrod top (15, 16, 17). [**Note:** from figure 17 the bayonet has been removed to show more clearly the hand movements]. The next words of command are '*Draw Ramrods*' in two movements (18, 19), '*Ram Down Cartridge*', push down the cartridge, and ram home with two quick strokes (20, 21, 22), '*Return Ramrods*' (23, 24), and '*Shoulder Arms*'.' The quoted text here is taken from the original drill book.

When shouldering a loaded firelock the soldier struck the top of the muzzle with the right hand to fix the ramrod and bayonet more firmly.

For loading in quick time the command, at the Shoulder, was '*Prime and Load*'. The soldier came at once to the Priming Position (12), and continued to load as quickly as possible taking his time from the flugel man in front for 'Casting About' and 'Shouldering' only. There are written accounts, however, which state that the men actually dispensed with the ramrod and jerked the bullet down the barrel with a couple of hard blows on the ground with the butt of the firelock.

Up to and indeed beyond the period under review, the British soldier drilled with the fingers extended, the flat of the hand and the little finger touching the thigh.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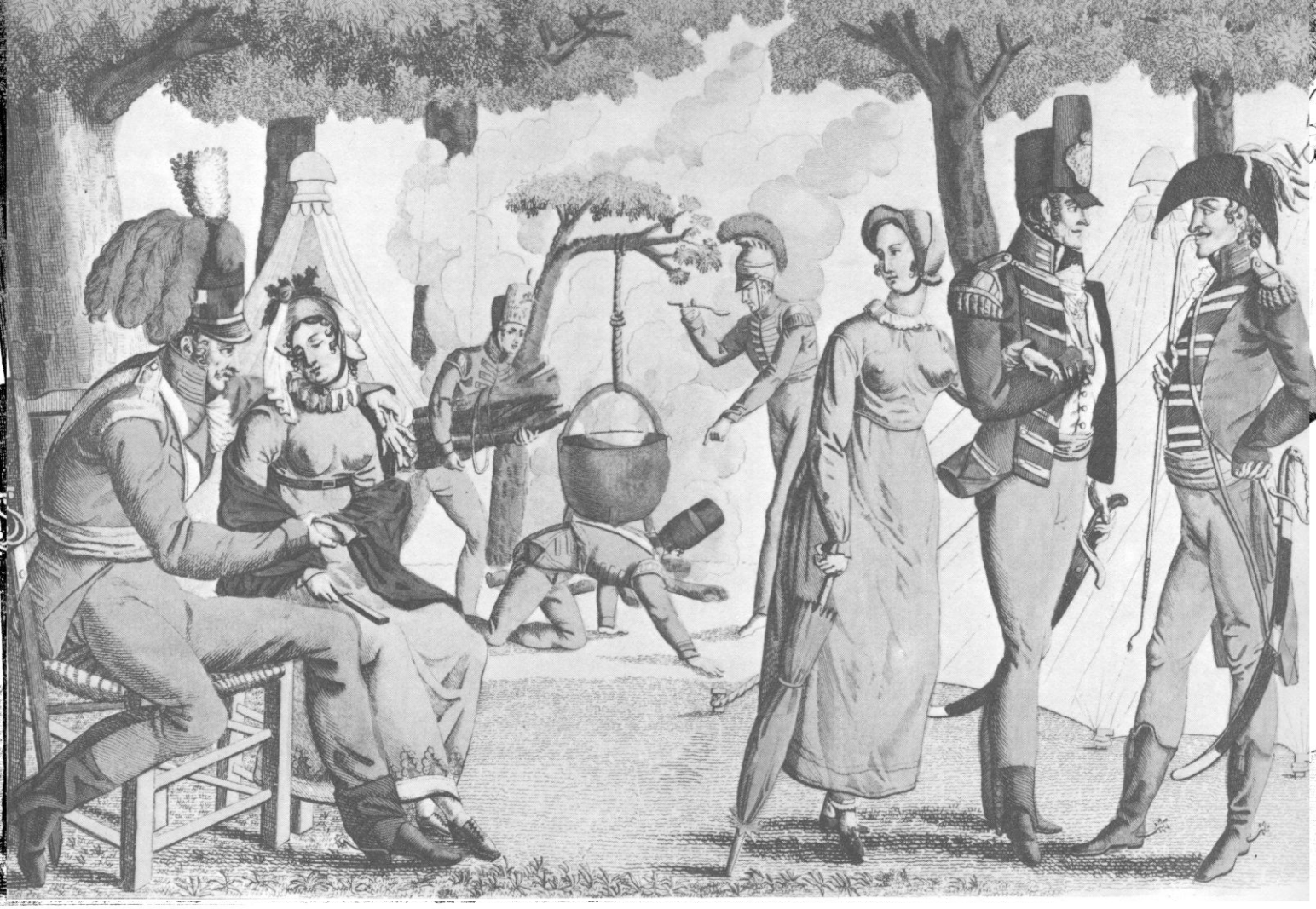


Behind the brigades and battalions in the field came a 'tail' of supporting services, including engineers, commissariat, waggon train and medical personnel, as well as a horde of camp followers. Many of these services came into their own when the troops were in camp rather than in battle (with the obvious exception of engineers and medical personnel). This contemporary French print showing British troops in camp, though inaccurate in uniform detail, gives a good impression of a typical encampment scene – complete with attendant lady camp followers (French National Library).

DIVISIONAL SERVICES

The Commissary

The vital processes of supplying the Army with food and forage for the horses was dealt with by the Commissariat. Fortescue gives a very good picture of the Commissariat during the Peninsular Wars. He states that the command was in the hands of the Commissary General who had District Commissaries, Assistant Commissaries of various grades and Central Commissaries with storekeeper underlings. Some idea of the establishment is given for 1805 – 1 Commissary General, 19 District Commissaries, 25 Assistant Commissaries, 12 Acting Commissaries, 43 Central Commissaries, 23 Clerks, 83 Storekeepers, 5 master bakers, 1 director of waggons, 1 Inspector of waggons and 2 conductors.

At this period the Commissariat's duty to the Army lay only in the provision of bread for the men, forage for the animals and fuel for the camp fires. All other supplies were under the control of the Quartermaster General, the Barrackmaster General, and the Medical Department.

At the beginning of the Peninsular Wars organisation as such was almost non-existent, the officials were often corrupt, or inefficient, and there were constant complaints from commanders in the field that the essential services were not getting through. For an army having to depend on its thousands of horses, mules, oxen and donkeys this was a crisis. Wellington was responsible to a very great extent for the subsequent organisation for an efficient system of land transport. Initially he had to teach the Commissary-General how he wanted the vital supply lines of communication to be set up and maintained. Each soldier was entitled to a certain weight of bread each day and had to use his own very limited resources to supplement this with local provisions. With the very strict orders regarding looting this often proved difficult, especially as the French had no such scruples, and often stripped the land of every possible sort of animal and vegetable provision. Naturally when the army was on a major campaign the 'camp-followers' behind the commissary train brought as much meat, liquor, and 'other delights' as they could muster and set up sutler's shops to offer, in a very rough way, the kind of service offered by the NAAFI in World War 2.

Notwithstanding the ministrations of Wellington the Commissariat were a constant cause of complaint and in this respect there is no doubt that the Waterloo campaign did not differ from the Peninsular Wars. One insoluble problem was the enormous number of waggons required to supply an Army of any size. The large, swaying Flemish waggons with their high draught and large iron shod wheels are mentioned in several contemporary accounts, especially when the troops were trying to effect an orderly retreat or to manoeuvre on the narrow Belgian roads. Sketches done in the Peninsular show the type of scene – waggons, piled with provender, and surmounted by either the women of the regiment or commissariat storemen. The troops hated the commissary and blamed them whenever the eagerly awaited bread or oats for their horses did not arrive at the evening bivouacs.

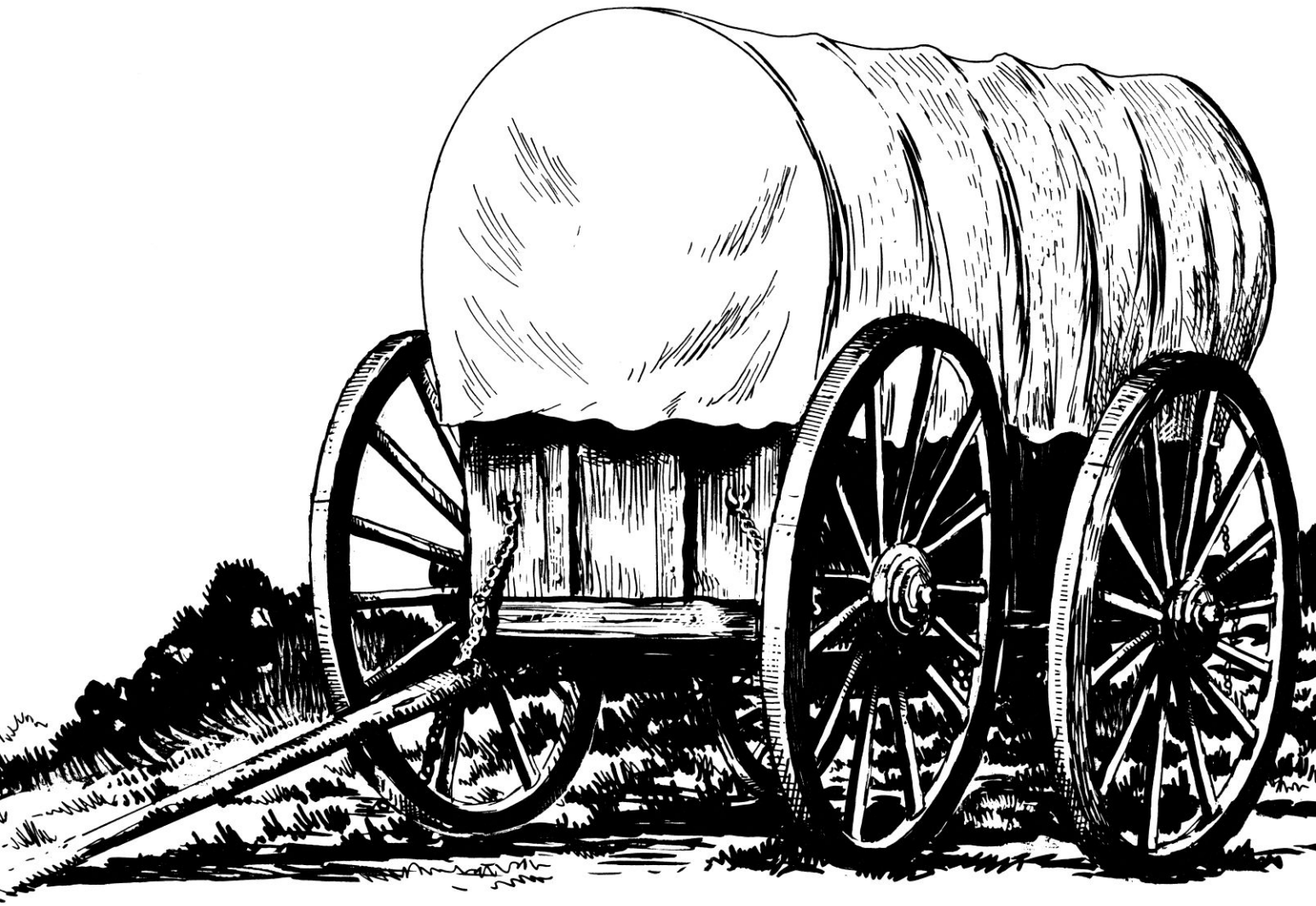
Typical camp follower for the infantry and cavalry at the time of Waterloo was the Belgian peasant sutleress. This drawing is taken from details in old prints and contemporary written descriptions.

The Royal Waggon Train

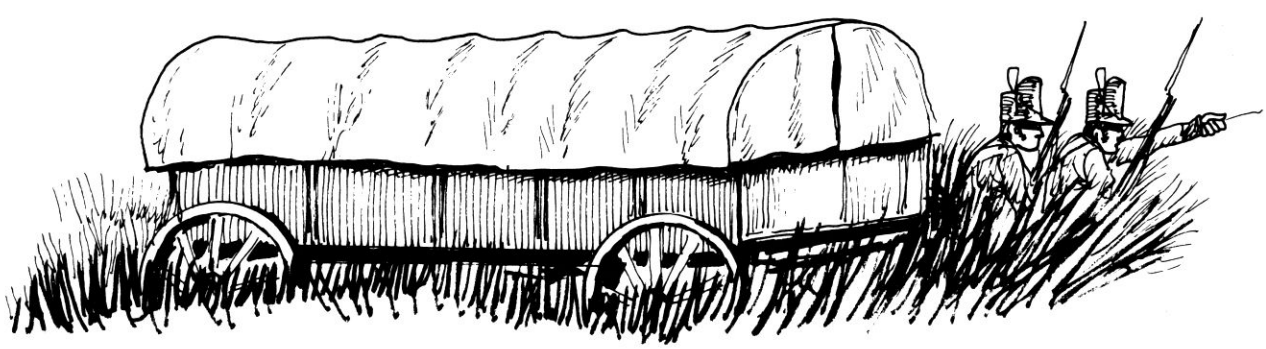
The movement of clothing, equipment and ammunition was carried out by the Royal Waggon Train who were the forerunners of the Royal Corps of Transport. This Corps had been raised in 1704 as the Corps of Royal Waggoners, became the Royal Waggon Corps in 1799 and the Royal Waggon Train in 1802. Some idea of how the Corps operated can be gathered from the following precis of orders which were issued in 1804.

The corps was regulated in troops and the Quartermasters acted in the same capacity as similar ranks in the cavalry. Besides a sergeant-major, corporals, farriers and trumpeters the corps consisted of artificers, drivers and armed men (the latter to be regarded as 'on the road to preferment'). They were apparently intended to act as escort to the waggons and to ensure that vital stores got through to the troops and were not diverted into the hands of some marauding band of guerrillas. Waggons were of various types designed to carry the commodity for which they were specifically intended. There were for example 'Powder', 'Shot', 'Bread', 'Forage' and 'Spring' waggons all of which were pole draughts. The Bread Waggon had a 'roof' which was covered with oiled cloth and was made to take off occasionally. The 'Forage' waggon had a tilt of raw canvas which was supported by 8 tilt hoops. Ammunition Waggons were apparently made with a more solid and incombustible roof and the 'Spring' had a tilt of painted canvas with 7 hoop supports.

The uniform of the Waggon Train comprised a shako of the Light Dragoon pattern with white or silver trim, a red tunic with



A typical train waggon, showing the pole draught. This is a Spring Waggon with seven hoops and a canvas tilt.



An infantry waggon of the 1815 period, taken from a contemporary drawing by A. J. Langendijk. Note the loose front to the tarpaulin cover. This appears to be a Forage Waggon.

Trooper of the Royal Waggon Train wearing greatcoat. Note the light Dragoon type shako, in this case with oilskin cover. This is typical foul weather dress while on the march. Details are taken from a drawing by Wynant Aerts.

A British waggoner of the 1815 period. This detail is from a contemporary print by G. Morland. Note the traditional English-style 'Frock-Smock'.

blue facings and rows of white metal or silver buttons in a flat lace frame like Royal Artillery Drivers. Their other issues included a blue 'foraging' cap, a white stable jacket, a pair of 'Russian Duck' overalls, 'leggins', a black leather stock and clasp and a pair of blue breeches. Their waistcoats were flannel. The men carried carbines and bayonets, wore cloaks in inclement weather and had boots with spurs. The equipment was similar to the rest of the army and their sergeants wore sashes. Until 1811 the uniform was blue faced red but after that date a new uniform of red faced blue was authorised by the Prince Regent on behalf of His Majesty the King. No doubt this was to regularise the position of the unit being 'Royal' and having the normal blue (Royal) facings. The strange thing is that the Army Lists of 1813 to 1817 still indicate the uniform as blue faced red.

The officers' belt plate was silver, oval, with a Garter in the centre bearing 'Royal Waggon Train' and the Crown above. The centre of the Garter was enamelled blue with a silver 'GR'. The officers' buttons were also silver with a 'GR' and crown and etched 'Royal Waggon Train' around the rim. The front of the officers' jackets were laced with silver. The many hundreds of waggons both of the Train, the Artillery Train and the Commissary, to maintain an Army of the size of the Anglo-Allied Army at Waterloo, must have presented the Staff with enormous problems in the main highways and the little lanes behind the battlefield. Apart from the sheer numbers of waggons involved the modern mind can hardly accept the numbers of horses which must have been involved.

Medical Organisation

EACH regiment had its own surgeon and his assistant who were dressed in the regimental uniform.

The Army Medical Department was under the control of three General Officers – The Physician-General; the Surgeon-General; and the Inspector of Infirmaries later known as the Inspector of Hospitals. The Apothecary-General was responsible for the provision of all medicines and the provision of surgical instruments and other equipment to the base hospitals, the Regimental Surgeons having to provide their own instruments. Fortescue reports that the organisation was open to all kinds of malpractise and nepotism. Corruption lead to the appointment of physicians and surgical staff with no proper diplomas or with no experience in military surgery. The department was rife with patronage and as a consequence the supply problems were often acute and the medicines of poor quality, badly packed and very expensive.

Wellington's favourite Surgeon Dr McGrigor tried as far as possible, to organise things on a better footing, providing proper divisional and base hospitals, and a supply of better qualified apothecaries and surgeons. Certainly the British Army of the period did not have the facilities organised by Chief Surgeon Larrey of the French Army whose organisation of base hospitals included special diets, heat and light to the wards, and special provisions of linen and 'Furnishings and Utensils'.

Some years ago a lecture was given to the British Model Soldier Society by a well-known London surgeon who had studied the techniques of the army surgeons of the Waterloo period. He produced his collection of contemporary instruments including knives, probes, saws and retractors all of which indicated the primitive methods used in those days. Because of the absence of knowledge of aseptics and anaesthetics, all cutting and sawing into the inner cavities of the body had to be done without the proper sterilisation of instruments or the induced unconsciousness of the wounded man. The only resort was a deep draught of rum, a leather gag and the rest was entirely a mixture of luck and speed. The doctor demonstrated how the surgeon had to amputate a limb in a matter of minutes to avoid the shock of pain killing his patient. Even after the limb was removed the problem of staunching of the blood often resulted in death. It is said that one in three had the luck to survive. In the heat of battle many soldiers had limbs removed even when the only damage was a simple fracture and the surgeon's limited knowledge or resources gave him no other choice but to cut away the offending damaged area. Terrible wounds were inflicted by the large solid shot, the spreading case and chain shot and the low velocity lead balls from the

muskets. A series of very careful water colours were prepared by the medical staff at Waterloo and these are preserved in the Royal Army Medical Corps Museum. The sickening drawings reveal that many survived but with indescribable wounds.

The Medical Staff wore red faced black. The Medical Inspector wore a single breasted coat with black velvet collar and cuffs, slashed sleeves and skirts, yellow hospital staff buttons, two gold epaulettes on black velvet, two buttons, one on either end of the collar, two on each cuff, two on each sleeve and blue pantaloons. The headdress was a cocked hat with a black feather, black button and a black silk loop.

The Deputy Inspector wore the same but with one buttonhole on each cuff and two on each sleeve. The physicians the same. The Surgeons the same but with one buttonhole on each cuff and two on each sleeve. The Apothecaries had an epaulette on the right shoulder, one button on each cuff, and two on the sleeve. One authority suggests the cuffs were red. The Hospital Mates had red cuffs and an epaulette on the right shoulder, two buttons on the sleeves and none on the cuffs. The Purveyors wore the same as the Physicians but with silver epaulettes and buttons and their deputies were dressed as the apothecaries but with one silver epaulette and button.

Medical staff in the uniform described in the text, the forage cap being shown on the right as a contrast to the cocked hat. At left is a Medical Inspector, centre is a Deputy Inspector (wearing overalls as an alternative to breeches), and to the right is an Apothecary, with the single epaulette which distinguished his rank.

Left: *A regimental surgeon in working dress during the fighting at Waterloo. He wears his forage cap, and medical type overalls over his shirt.* Bottom: *A contemporary print showing the battlefield in the late evening after the battle. In the centre group the artist has attempted to portray Medical personnel treating wounded men. Note the wife and child and the smoking ruins of Hougoumont in the background.*

Right: *Surgeon of a British infantry battalion in 1815. This drawing, based on contemporary drawings by Wynant Aerts, shows the infantry pattern shako with black plume which was distinctive to the medical staff. Epaulettes are not being worn on the regulation coat which has the sleeve and cuff button arrangement denoting a surgeon.*

Left: *'Walking wounded' often assisted the medical staff at a casualty station. Here a light company private carries in a teenage Ensign.*

Royal Sappers and Miners

IN 1815 the corps were wearing the high-fronted shako but with yellow plate, cords and tassels, black cockade and with a white feather. The jackets were red with royal blue collars and cuffs and yellow bastion ended loops on the fronts and on the cuffs at equal distances. A unique feature of the jacket was the loop of bastion lace on each collar end with a button. A feature which appeared on later uniforms of this corps. The pockets were horizontal and were edged with yellow lace and had four bastion loops and buttons and there was a triangle of similar lace at the waist at the rear. The corps carried a pouch on a white belt and a bayonet on a broad shoulder belt with the distinction of a rectangular open buckle on the front and a brass slide. For working in the field a simple red frock was worn with royal blue collar and round cuffs. The coat had eight yellow buttons down the front and simple tails with vertical pockets with three buttons. The trousers were grey and Connolly shows them with a broad red stripe with brass buttons suggesting that they were in fact overalls. The head-dress was a leather cap with a semi-circular turned up front and rear flap, very like the light infantry cap of the American Revolutionary period but with a back plate as well as the front. The cap was lettered 'RSM' on the front in yellow and could also be worn with the flaps turned up on either side.

The Royal Engineer Field Officers wore the cocked hat with gold loop and button and white feather and a double breasted long tailed scarlet coat with royal blue collar and cuffs. The collar ends and the cuffs and the lapels were decorated with gold lace loops. Gold epaulettes were worn on each shoulder. The grey trousers had a gold stripe down the outside of each leg. The sword was worn on a white leather waistbelt with a rectangular plate and on slings. Hamilton-Smith shows the officer with a telescope and a map with an 'RSM' private in the rear with a coil of rope, etc.

The Sappers and Miners were responsible for making fortifications, building entrenchments and pontoon bridges and making gabions, etc, and of course all mining work.

Barrack Life

The men's days were filled with the routine of cleaning and maintaining their arms and accoutrements, polishing their cartridge boxes, brushing and repairing their clothes, blackening their shoes and brightening their buttons. The companies were inspected daily by the sergeants and the lieutenants.

The captains regularly visited the soldiers's messes and their barrack rooms to ensure that they kept their 'arms and persons' clean.

The soldiers' rations were usually bread, biscuit, salted meat and soup and with it they drank porter and their issue of rum.

When the regiment was encamped the white bell tents were set up in rows and formed in groups of companies and the men were ordered to keep them 'swept clean and tidy'.

Each company had a 'bell of arms' where the muskets and pikes were piled and the colours were kept cased and under the quarter guard.

Officers either dined together or in their own quarters or together when several were billeted in the same house.

On campaign the tents etc., were usually with the regimental baggage and not available for overnight halts. It was on these occasions, especially in inclement weather, that the British soldier had to improvise. In these times every waggon tilt, barn, hedgerow, lea of a wall or a ditch became a temporary refuge from the rain and cold.

The Height of the NCOs and Privates

An Inspection Report for the period just before Waterloo records that the average height of the grenadiers was 5 ft 11 inches, and the battalion companies 5 ft 7 inches. The height of the Light Companies is given as 5 ft 8 inches.

Sergeant Major of Royal Sappers and Miners wearing the uniform described in the text. Note in particular the bastion loops on the collar, and the broad shoulder belt to which the bayonet frog was attached.

Field officer of Royal Engineers in the uniform described in the text.

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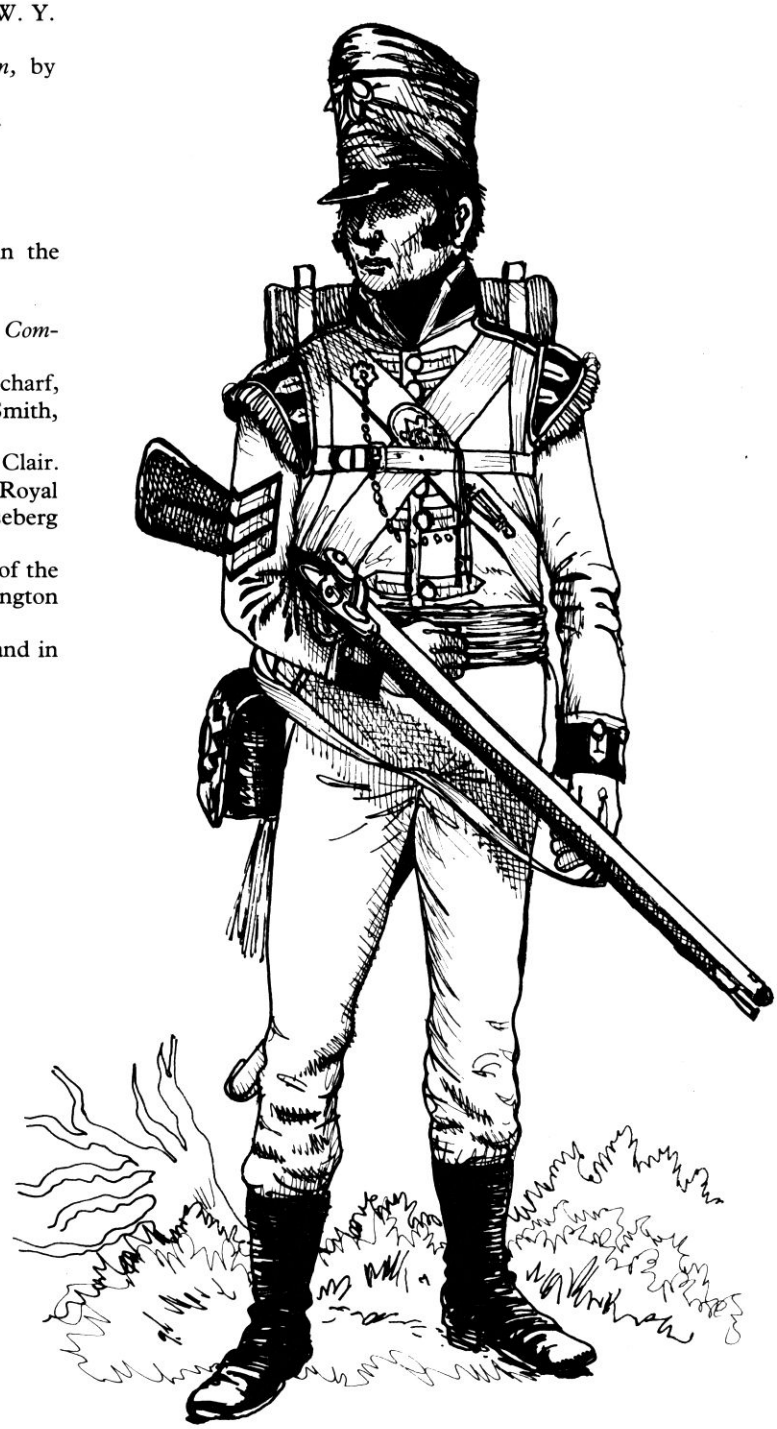

Coldstream Regiment of Foot Guards; sergeant of light company, in service dress.

Above, left: First Regiment of Foot Guards, Private Man of the Light Company in Service Dress, 1815, wearing full marching order with trousers and gaiters. Note the badge on the pack and the lettering on the water-bottle. Right: Coldstream Regiment of Foot Guards, Sergeant of the Battalion Company in Service Dress, 1815. He wears the campaign cover over the shako and the special Guards Sergeant's overcoat with blue facings on the collar and sleeves. Weapons carried are the spontoon and NCO's pattern sword.

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